

Statement of U.S. Representative Sherwood Boehlert
Floor Consideration of H. Res. 681,
A Resolution Celebrating National Engineers Week

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 681, a resolution recognizing the importance of engineers and supporting National Engineers Week.

From the grandest of skyscrapers to microchips and the smallest of medical devices, engineers continue to design and construct products that are vital to our daily lives and our nation's economy. Unfortunately, American students today are losing interest in engineering. The National Academy of Sciences report, "Rising Above the Gathering Storm," notes that, "after secondary school, fewer U.S. students pursue science and engineering degrees than is the case of students in other countries. About 6% of our undergraduates major in engineering; that percentage is the second lowest among developed countries." We need to get American students at all levels back into science and engineering classes. Our nation's continued global and economic leadership depends on our ability to inspire the next generation of engineers.

H. Res. 681 recognizes and supports the goals and ideals of National Engineers Week as an important part of educating and building a competitive workforce for the 21st century. For example, National Engineers Week exposes students that might otherwise never dream of a career in a technical field to opportunities in engineering through programs such as the "Future City Competition" (a contest for middle school student teams to design a visionary city) and the "Global Marathon For, By and About Women in Engineering" (a 24-hour long series of presentations intended to attract young women into the engineering workforce). During this week, students and professionals at all levels will be motivated to explore the vast opportunities open to them in the field of engineering.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the National Society for Professional Engineers for its ongoing efforts to educate children and adults about the importance of engineering. I would also like to thank Congressman Inglis and Congressman Lipinski for their leadership on this important issue. I ask that you join me in recognizing the importance of engineering in our daily lives and the positive impact of National Engineers Week by voting in favor of H. Res. 681.